

MINUTES
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commission Meeting
Old Supreme Court Chambers – State Capitol Building – Room 317
Helena, MT
DECEMBER 10, 2009

Commission Members Present: Shane Colton, Chairman; Dan Vermillion, Vice-Chairman; Willie Doll; Ron Moody; Bob Ream.

Fish, Wildlife & Parks Staff Present: Joe Maurier, Director, and FWP Staff.

Guests: See December 10, 2009 Commission file folder for names of who signed in.

Topics of Discussion:

1. **Call to Order - Pledge of Allegiance**
 2. **Approval of Minutes of November 12, 2009**
 3. **Approval of Commission Expenses through November, 2009**
 4. **Commission Reports**
 5. **FWP Custer Avenue Land Exchange with Northwestern Energy – Proposed**
 6. **Region 6 Glasgow Headquarters Property Addition – Final**
 7. **Stipek Fishing Access Site near Glendive – Final**
 8. **MDT Hwy 83 Land Exchange on the Blackfoot Clearwater WMA – Final**
 9. **Classification Review Committee Species Classification – Proposed**
 10. **2010 Non-Resident Combination License Annual Rule Amendment – Final**
 11. **2010 License and Permit Allocation Process for Deer, Elk, and Antelope – Proposed**
 12. **2010/2011 Deer/Elk/Antelope Hunting Seasons and HD Boundaries – Proposed**
 13. **2010/2011 Moose/Sheep/Goat Hunting Seasons and HD Boundaries – Proposed**
 14. **2010/2011 Black Bear Hunting Seasons and HD Boundaries – Proposed**
 15. **2010/2011 Biennial Quota Ranges – Proposed**
 16. **2010/2011 Bison Hunting Seasons and HD Boundaries – Proposed**
 17. **2010/2011 Lion Hunting Seasons and HD Boundaries – Proposed**
 18. **2010/2011 Upland Game Bird Regulations and Turkey Quotas – Proposed**
 19. **2010/2011 Hunting Season Dates – Proposed**
 20. **2010/2011 Game Damage/Management Season Quota Authorizations – Proposed**
 21. **Open Microphone – Public Opportunity to Address Additional FWP Issues**
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1. **Opening - Pledge of Allegiance.** Chairman Colton called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.
 2. **Approval of the Commission Meeting Minutes of November 12, 2009.**
Action: Doll moved and Ream seconded the motion to approve the November 12, 2009 minutes. Motion carried.
 3. **Approval of the November, 2009 Commission Expense Report.**
Action: Ream moved and Vermillion seconded the motion to approve the expense report as presented. Motion carried.

4. Commission Reports.

Vermillion stated that general big game season harvest in HD360 and HD362 was successful as a result of the coordinator spreading out the hunters. He participated in a well-attended meeting in Region 3 last week that quickly became a conversation about wolves.

Ream attended CAC meetings in Missoula and Kalispell that were well attended. There was a great deal of interest expressed regarding season setting, and much talk about the wolf season. He feels the wolf hunting season was successful, with good geographic distribution. A good precedent has been set from which work can continue.

Doll attended a meeting in Billings where many issues were discussed. Opening big game season on Saturday rather than Sunday brought a lot of interest. Discussion regarding weeds transported into the eastern part of the state prompted the suggestion that a certificate be issued indicating that the undersides of four wheelers and vehicles had been car washed to remove weeds, however it would be difficult to enforce. Another topic was related to the 5-week season where it was discussed to set the first three weeks as either sex, and the last two weeks as antlerless only. He said there is an increase in lion numbers outside the Bearpaws, and although the regulations cannot be changed this year, the situation needs to be addressed. He would like to see the turkey season shut down as there is no longer a population of them; there are virtually none left.

Colton said since the lion quota filled so rapidly, that situation needs to be looked into.

5. FWP Custer Avenue Land Exchange with Northwestern Energy – Proposed. Paul Sihler, FWP Lands and Outreach Section Supervisor, explained that Northwestern Energy owns a quarter-acre parcel of land adjoining twelve acres of FWP property, and FWP owns a quarter-acre parcel nearby, but not adjacent to the twelve acres. Northwestern Energy proposed a land exchange that would enable both parties to better utilize the land parcels. This proposal is basically a boundary realignment. Appraisals will be conducted, and once the parties are in agreement on the exchange details, the proposal will be published in an environmental assessment for public review and comment.

Action: Doll moved and Vermillion seconded the motion to authorize FWP to pursue the development of a land exchange proposal with Northwestern Energy involving a portion of the Department's Custer Avenue property. Motion carried.

6. Region 6 Glasgow Headquarters Property Addition – Final. Paul Sihler, FWP Lands and Outreach Section Supervisor, explained that FWP proposes to purchase a small parcel of undeveloped private land adjacent to the Region 6 Headquarters in Glasgow (.88-acres) to meet storage and parking needs. The Commission endorsed acquisition of a nearby property in September of 2005, however that particular transaction fell through in April of 2008. Shortly thereafter, FWP discussed with neighboring landowners, Carney and Fossum, the possibility of dividing off .88 of an acre from their 15-acre parcel immediately east of the FWP complex for sale to FWP. A survey and appraisal established the value as \$42,300, but the landowners have agreed to a price of \$38,000. No comments were received in response to the Environmental Assessment.

Action: Doll moved and Vermillion seconded the motion to authorize the Department to purchase the Carney/Fossum lot in Glasgow for \$38,000 as an addition to the Region 6 headquarters site. Motion carried.

7. Stipek Fishing Access Site near Glendive – Final. Paul Sihler, FWP Lands and Outreach Section Supervisor, explained that FWP proposes to purchase, as an addition to the Stipek Fishing Access Site, an adjoining 78-acre parcel owned by 777 Properties located on the Yellowstone River approximately eight miles north of Glendive. Acquisition of this property will increase the FAS to 110 acres, will double the length of Yellowstone River shoreline to over ½ mile, and will convey to FWP the remaining one-half interest in the access road. The price of the property is \$331,000, and funds will come from the Access Montana program. Nine written and several verbal comments were received in response to the Environmental Assessment. All comments were in support of the proposal, with the exception of one that suggested acquiring a fishing access site upstream from Glendive.

Action: Colton moved and Vermillion seconded the motion to authorize the Department to purchase the 777 Properties parcel as an addition to the Stipek Fishing Access Site along the Yellowstone River north of Glendive. Motion carried.

8. MDT Hwy 83 Land Exchange on the Blackfoot Clearwater WMA – Final. Ken McDonald, FWP Wildlife Division Bureau Chief, explained that FWP proposes to exchange 19 acres on the Blackfoot-Clearwater Wildlife Management Area for a 53-acre parcel of land contiguous to the WMA owned by Montana Department of Transportation. This exchange is necessary for MDT's project to widen and realign Highway 83 between Clearwater Junction and Seeley Lake. This realignment would affect the WMA at eight specific points, consisting of the 19 acres proposed for conveyance to MDT. MDT will use the excess value, \$112,274, as bank/credit allowance for future MDT impacts on FWP lands, but will be limited to FWP Region 2 Wildlife Bureau lands that are not federally encumbered. If this proposal is denied, MDT could invoke their power of condemnation, whereby FWP would only have the option of receiving monetary compensation rather than replacement land. The 53-acre parcel would then likely sell on the open market for residential use, which would result in serious loss of habitat, and would impede wildlife movement to and from the WMA. The Environmental Assessment generated only supportive comments.

Action: Ream moved and Vermillion seconded the motion to approve FWP's recommendation to acquire 53 acres adjacent to the Blackfoot Clearwater WMA in exchange for 19 acres needed by MDT for Highway 83. Motion carried.

9. Classification Review Committee Species Classification – Proposed. Eileen Ryce, FWP Invasive Species Coordinator, explained that exotic wildlife must be classified as non-controlled, controlled, or prohibited to be legally imported into Montana. A review committee, comprised of FWP, Montana Departments of Livestock, Montana Department of Agriculture, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, a representative of the exotic pet trade, and a citizen with an interest in fish and wildlife evaluates petitions for classifications. Recommendations are based on environmental, ecological, public health and safety, and economic impacts caused by the animal if it is released or escapes from captivity, and on the ability to control and contain the animal in captivity. Prohibited animals used for medical experimentation must also receive approval.

The pet industry has now submitted a petition to classify the Eritrea clawed frog (*Xenopus clivii*), the Cameroon volcano frog (*Xenopus amietii*), and the Hermit crab (*Coenobita sp.*) as non-controlled. The ability of survival if these animals were turned loose is very low, and there is no evidence that any of them would cause harm to the environment or public safety.

Moody asked if any adverse comments had been received, and if the process includes outside peer review.

Ryce replied that the comment period does not open until these proposals are approved. The two letters petitioning these species were submitted from the pet trade. The classification committee is a peer group who will also solicit additional information from outside sources if needed. Any animals imported into Montana require a permit from the Department of Livestock for importation.

Moody said he does not see the importation of species into Montana to be economically feasible. He feels one more layer of review from outside sources is necessary; perhaps by a scientific body outside of Montana.

Dave Risley, FWP Fish & Wildlife Administrator, said the Committee conducts intensive reviews while following stringent protocols. Montana's cold weather also prevents the propagation of many species. This is a nationwide issue.

Colton stated that Eileen Ryce and Tim Feldner, FWP Wildlife Permit Manager, have guided the Committee, and they and the Commission have been extremely conservative. Many species have been limited already. He is comfortable with the direction the Department and Commission have taken.

Ream asked if they come from captive facilities. If animals from other countries are considered endangered, Montana should not import them.

Feldner said the endangered species regulations apply only to wild species. These particular animals are captive bred out of Florida.

Action: Ream moved and Vermillion seconded the motion to approve the proposed classification of exotic species as recommended by the classification review committee.

Chairman Colton asked for public comment. There was none.

Action on Motion: Motion carried.

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Director Maurier recognized Harold Wentland for his 42 years of service to FWP. Wentland has done a great job, and he will take a lot of institutional knowledge with him when he retires at the end of the year.  
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10. 2010 Non-Resident Combination License Annual Rule Amendment – Final. Hank Worsech, FWP License Bureau Chief, stated that the Variable-Priced Licensing Advisory Council met in Helena in August to prepare fee recommendations for 2010 outfitter-sponsored licenses. The Council unanimously recommended:

- 5,390 for the B-10 Outfitter Sponsored Big Game Combination license at \$1,250 per license
- Outfitter Sponsored Elk Combination license at \$995 per license (part of above quota)
- 2,250 quota for the B-11 Outfitter Sponsored Deer Combination license at \$995 per license
- HB585 (Coming home to Hunt)

HB585 was passed during the 2009 legislative session allowing for 500 Class B-10 Nonresident Big Game Combination licenses and 500 Class B-11 Nonresident Deer Combination Licenses. Adult nonresidents who have family members residing in Montana and who previously hunted as a resident in Montana or have completed Montana Hunter safety prior to March 1, 2010 may receive a sponsored B10 or B11 license. The nonresident must be sponsored and accompanied by an immediate family member. The quotas for the licenses will not affect the license quotas established in 87-2-505 and 87-2-510.

Action: Vermillion moved and Moody seconded the motion to adopt the 2010 Annual Rule for the Sale of Nonresident Combination Licenses as proposed.

Vermillion stated that some concerns had been expressed by the public about the increase in the outfitter sponsored licenses. This is statutorily directed. He said the Council was very thorough, and reached a unanimous decision.

Action on Motion: Motion carried.

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Commissioner Vermillion introduced a bonus point enhancement proposal that the Headwater Sportsmen's Association asked the Commission to consider. He said the Licensing Bureau feels it is doable with the limitation of fee changes, which is under the purview of the legislature. The proposal is to enhance the current Montana Bonus Point System to incorporate a multiplier in determining bonus chances for participating hunters.

The current system allocates one bonus point for each species as applied for by the sportsman. The points accumulate each year as long as the small fee is paid or until the applicant is successful in the drawing. Based on purely statistical theory a person with 8 bonus points currently for any one special draw species has only a slight mathematical advantage over the first time applicant who does not even participate in the bonus system. The “multiplier enhancement” would follow the theory that encourages the sportsman to participate as they see value in their participating and truly create a better opportunity to draw. Bonus points awarded would be as follows:

- 1 bonus point -----1x1=1 bonus chance
- 2 “ “ -----2x2=4 bonus chances
- 3 “ “ -----3x3=9 bonus chances
- 8 “ “ -----8x8=64 bonus chances

The proposed enhancement should be very inexpensive for FWP to implement, as it is most likely a data input correction in our current computer system. The anticipated increase in participation in purchasing points would generate any monies needed in the short run to make the computer changes and future monies would increase the annual receipts to the FWP.

Neal Whitney, FWP License Analyst, said he had performed an audit on sheep in 2009 using this new process, and the results indicated a large increase in chances.

Moody said to put it out for public comment. The present system does not provide the bonus opportunity it did when it was first established.

Colton said this is a large issue and he would be reluctant to make a decision on such short notice. He questioned if there is time to gather data to present to the public.

Worsech said mock drawings could be done to obtain data.

Director Maurier asked what happens to existing points.

Worsech said current points would move forward. This system would create increased opportunity.

*Action: Vermillion moved and Ream seconded the motion to enhance the current Montana Bonus Point System to incorporate a multiplier in determining bonus chances for participating hunters.*

Chairman Colton asked for public comment. There was none.

*Action on Motion: Motion carried.*

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Ken McDonald, FWP Wildlife Division Bureau Chief, spoke to the process behind the proposals. Subsequent to comments received two years ago expressing the opinion that the public did not receive ample opportunity to comment, FWP performed extensive internal and external (public) scopings for ideas and thoughts on regulations. The Commission reviewed the scoping summary in October. He said there is a full cadre of biologists and field staff who meet with the public and work on recommendations on a daily basis, and before final decisions are made on these proposals, written comments will be accepted, forty-five statewide public meetings will be held, and the FWP website offers Survey Monkey for additional public comment opportunities.

11. 2010 License and Permit Allocation Process for Deer, Elk, and Antelope – Proposed. *NOTE: No changes from 2009 season elements are proposed EXCEPT the specific items generally listed below.*

Statewide

Move nonresident application deadline for either sex elk permits and antlered buck mule deer permits to March 15. Drawing allotment would be 10% of previous year's number of permits. Surplus will be determined after that.

Moody asked if the entire drawing process (resident and non-resident) could be moved to earlier in the year.

Kujala replied that the annual surveys have to be completed before the drawings, and surveys occur in the winter, spring, and early summer.

Action: Vermillion moved and Ream seconded the motion to adopt permit allocations as proposed.

Chairman Colton asked for public comment.

Mary Ellen Schnurr, MOGA, supports the motion.

Doll suggested eliminating the third choice in archery permits as it would help non-residents, and stated that party applications of "up to five" is too many, it should be reduced to three.

Colton stated that the party application is a separate item. There has been no scoping on elimination of the third choice so this would not be an appropriate time to act on it.

Action on motion: Motion carried.

Statewide

Implement party application up to five persons for residents and nonresidents for deer and elk special permit and license applications. Residents and nonresidents may not mix if application deadline above is adjusted.

Action: Vermillion moved and Moody seconded the motion to adopt the party application of two to five persons.

Chairman Colton asked for public comment.

Mary Ellen Schnurr, MOGA, said they support the proposal for up to five people, resident or non-resident.

Action on Motion: Motion carried.

12. 2010/2011 Deer/Elk/Antelope Hunting Seasons and HD Boundaries – Proposed. Season structures and hunting district boundaries are adopted biennially for all game species. FWP proposes existing structure except for specific changes. Proposals are based on population status and/or other circumstances.

Deer and Elk

Statewide Proposal

Saturday opening day for deer and elk general big game season, which is one day earlier than the traditional Sunday opening day.

Action: Vermillion moved and Doll seconded the motion to approve a statewide Saturday opening day for deer and elk general big game season, which is one day earlier than the traditional Sunday opening day, for 2010-2011. Willie seconded.

Colton said the Commission and FWP is going to hear from the public about students missing out on opening day because of youth activities and sporting events in schools, etc.

Chairman Colton asked for public comment.

Tom Bugni, Skyline Sportsmen, said ten years ago he proposed this 10 years ago he brought this up and there a lot of people who have Saturday off, but would rather hunt than go to football game. Opening day was the day to go up and set up camp, but found hunt three hours on Sunday morning and go back home. Trespass for an additional day was an issue back a few years ago. A lot of people have limited days to hunt so this adds one more day. Would create one more good opportunity.

Leroy Mehrling, Skyline Sportsmen, is in favor of the Saturday opener. It expands opportunity.

Tony Schoonen, Skyline Sportsmen, is in favor of Saturday opener, but wants to keep four wheelers out on opening day.

Larry Thomas, Anaconda Sportsmen, is in favor of the Saturday opener.

Director Maurier noted that many of the tentative proposals are due to public comments.

Action on Motion: Motion carried.

DEER **Statewide**

Create youth deer hunting season on third Thursday and Friday of October. Kids 12-15 accompanied by a non-hunting adult 18 or older may take whatever is valid during general season. (Teachers' conference annually falls during this time period.)

Colton suggested changing the upper age limit to 16 years of age.

Action: Moody moved and Vermillion seconded the motion to approve the youth hunting proposal as recommended.

Action: Moody amended the motion to change the age limits to 12-16. Colton seconded the motion to amend the motion.

Chairman Colton asked for public comment.

Steve Kamps, Montana Bowhunters Association, said this concerns them, and asked if this is statewide.

Kujala replied to the affirmative, and added that it is for deer only.

Action on Motion: Motion carried.

DEER **Region 1 - Deer**

No proposed changes except for date progressions.

Action: Ream moved and Moody seconded the motion to approve the Region 1 Deer proposals.

Chairman Colton asked for public comment. There was none.

Action on Motion: Motion carried.

Region 2 - Deer

HD 250 -- convert unlimited antlered buck mule deer permits to 400 limited permits

HDs 280/281/283/285/292/298 – convert general license ES WT archery and firearm season to AB WT; reduce antlerless licenses 281-00 and 283-00 from 100 each to 50 each

HD 282 – decrease 282-00 antlerless deer licenses from 50 to 25

HD 292/298 – combine unlimited antlered buck permits for each district into one permit batch (292-40) valid in both districts

Action: Ream moved and Vermillion seconded the motion to approve the Region 2 Deer proposals.

Chairman Colton asked for public comment. There was none.

Action on Motion: Motion carried.

Region 3 - Deer

HD 302 – convert from AB MD general license to unlimited AB MD unlimited permits 302-40; decrease antlerless MD licenses 302-00 from 75 to 25

HD 309 – increase OTC antlerless WT licenses from 1 to 5 per person

HD 320/331/333 – clarify antlerless MD licenses with LPT suffix XXX-00

HD 329 -- convert from AB MD general license to unlimited AB MD unlimited permits in 329-40; decrease antlerless MD licenses in 329-00 from 50 to 25

HD 388 – clarify language of Exclusion Zone in Weapons Restriction Area “Outside Weapons Restriction Area”; clarify in Deer/Elk and Antelope HD 388

Action: Vermillion moved and Moody seconded the motion to approve recommendations in HDs 302, 309, 320, 331, 333, and 388.

Chairman Colton asked for public comment:

Leroy Mehring, Skyline Sportsmen, said there are not 50 antlerless mule deer in the whole HD300 area and there are 50 permits. There should not be any antlerless mule deer hunting in any of the 300 districts, and no either sex either.

Vermillion stated that he consistently hears the concern that the HD300 district does not have a population of mule deer.

Action on Motion: Motion carried

Action: Vermillion moved and Colton seconded the motion to reduce the quota in HD302-40 and HD329 from 75 to 0.

Chairman Colton asked for public comment.

Leroy Mehring recommended adding HD330 into this motion as well - to 0 quota.

Kujala said that reducing to a zero quota is a structure change for the next two years. When the regulation booklet is produced, the numbers are brought forward from the previous year, and if there is a number in the book, applicants put in for the number in the book.

Action: Vermillion amended his motion to include two alternatives, the tentative as written, or the alternative of eliminating antlerless tags in those districts. Colton seconded the amendment to the motion. Motion carried.

Region 4 - Deer

REGION-WIDE -- convert any general license ES MD archery and firearm season to AB MD

LPT 004-10/498-00 – combine unlimited resident and nonresident single region antlerless WT license

HDs 400/401/406 – create 300 antlerless WT licenses 400-01 valid in all three HDs

HDs 404/444 – create 300 antlerless WT licenses 404-01 valid in both HDs

HD 406 – maintain access permit to Marias State Park/Wildlife Management Area; require ALS# for application; summer application period

HDs 416/446/449/452/454 – create 500 antlerless WT licenses 416-01 valid in all 5 HDs

HD 422 – create 50 antlerless MD licenses 422-00 valid outside Nat'l Forest Bndy

HD 424 – create 25 antlerless MD licenses 424-00 valid outside Nat'l Forest Bndy

HD 425 – create 25 antlerless MD licenses 425-00 valid outside Sun River WMA

HD 442 – create 25 antlerless MD licenses 442-00 valid outside Nat'l Forest Bndy and Ear Mtn WMA

Action: Moody moved and Vermillion seconded the motion to approve the Region 4 Deer proposals as presented.

Moody asked if since this is along the Rocky Mountain Front if it will require a hunter to pay extra money.

Kujala replied yes, as it is a general license, so would require an additional license.

Chairman Colton asked for public comment. There was none.

Action on Motion: Motion carried.

Region 5 - Deer

HDs 511/520/540 -- convert general license ES MD archery and firearm season to AB MD

HD 560 – convert general license ES MD firearm season to AB MD

Action: Colton moved and Vermillion seconded the motion to approve the Region 5 Deer proposals.

Chairman Colton asked for public comment. There was none.

Action on Motion: Motion carried.

Region 6 - Deer

Region-Wide -- combine unlimited resident and nonresident single region antlerless WT license 006-10

HD 630 – convert 630-20 ES WT license to ES WT permit

Pat Gunderson, FWP Region 6 Supervisor, said this is a handicapped hunt and was inadvertently established as a license area. This is a justification that the Missouri River Valley has an over-abundance from Fort Peck to the North Dakota border. All whitetail licenses will be honored.

Doll stated that there is not an over-abundance in portions along Milk River and Missouri River valleys.

Action: Doll moved and Vermillion seconded the motion to approve the Region 6 Deer proposals.

Chairman Colton asked for public comment.

Tony Schoonen, Skyline Sportsmen, said up to 7 mule deer doe permits are given out over the counter and he is concerned. The mule deer population is way down – do not give out that many permits over the counter.

Action on Motion: Motion carried.

Region 7 - Deer

No proposed changes.

Action: Colton moved and Moody seconded the motion to approve the Region 7 Deer proposals.

Chairman Colton asked for public comment.

Paul Ellis, MOGA, said there is a decline of populations in Region 7, and suggested to reduce or eliminate doe licenses in Region 7. Certain areas have no mule deer left, particularly in the Cherry Creek and Sheep Mountain areas.

John Wilkinson, Miles City, said the mule deer south of Miles City (Alzada, Ekalaka area), where three blizzards have occurred, have decreased by 35 percent, and the antelope have decreased by 75 percent. He said to stop deer hunting in those areas. The doe hunters will come back to his area where there are still some deer.

John Ensign, FWP Region 7 Wildlife Manager, said surveys are flown in the spring, and the blizzards occurred after spring counts were done. Going to region-wide tags allows discretionary hunting. Landowners don't have to allow hunting if there are no deer. Spring counts will provide information for adjusting quotas.

Action on Motion: Motion carried.

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Doll asked if the 5-week season could be changed so that the first three weeks are either sex, and the last two weeks are antlerless only. He suggested trying it in Regions 6 and 7 to see what happens. It is an attempt to remove the rifle season from the rut season. He would like to hear what the public has to say about it.

Colton said this issue came up years ago, and is hotly contested by several groups. He is apprehensive about putting a tentative this large out now without any public notice.

Kujala said that the discussion to remove the pressure from the bucks in the rut is not new. Historically, public comment reflects opinions on both ends of the spectrum. The deer plan speaks to five weeks, but does not talk about splitting the season. Doll's proposal could cause the hunters to be squeezed into a shorter time frame. FWP is using the adaptive deer plan, which looks at district-specific management of deer. This has been tried before in different areas with little satisfaction.

Vermillion stated that he is sensitive to the subject, and agreed that the mule deer plan needs to be reviewed, however a proposal of this magnitude would be best entertained at a later date as it is a big deal to a lot of people.

No action taken by the Commission on this issue.

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Mike Gilles, Basin, proposed a muzzleloaders season be allowed after the general season while the elk are migrating. Bowhunters have their own season so he feels the muzzleloaders should too.

No action taken by the Commission on this issue.

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**ELK**  
**Statewide**

Saturday opener one day earlier than traditional Sunday for firearm season

Assemble existing License Permit Types (LPTs) 401-15, 411-15, 420-15, 500-15, 502-15, 580-15, 590-15 and 799-15 for all or portions of the 23 HDs 401, 403, 441, 450, 411, 412, 426, 511, 530, 420, 447, 455, 500, 570, 502, 510, 520, 575, 580, 590, 702, 704, 705 (as described in 2009 regulations) **into one bundle/LPT 900-15**. This permit group would be valid only during the archery season throughout the entire area described in total by the 23 districts or portions of districts (see 2009 regulations). These permit holders could also archery hunt in other general license districts. Total number of permits would be equal to the sum of the first and second choice resident and nonresident eligible applicants from the 2009 drawing process. This sum is 2950 (rounded from 2947) and would accommodate 95% of the 2009 eligible resident applications and 45% of the 2009 eligible nonresident applications. This number of permits would apply to both the 2010 and 2011 seasons. Applicants may apply first, second or third choice. Antlerless elk would remain available on the general license during the archery season.

*Action: Ream moved and Vermillion seconded the motion to adopt the Statewide Elk recommendations as presented.*

Moody said there is the perception that people who draw the elk archery permits do not show up to hunt, and others would like the opportunity.

Vermillion stated that these tentative proposals will be presented statewide at regional meetings. The public needs to realize that the Commission does listen to their comments. Southeastern Montana has more public lands and block management areas to hunt on, creating a significant hunting opportunity. He questioned why it is so hard to reach objectives.

Kujala stated that the Department takes objectives seriously, and noted that the elk plan identifies three packages, which are restrictive, standard, and liberal.

Vermillion stated that a consistent issue is access, and one solution might be the HB454 agreements.

Kujala agreed, but stated that only one ranch has met the HB454 criteria and indicated interest.

Chairman Colton asked for public comment.

Jason Townsley, Montana Bowhunters Association, said they are consistently opposed to permits. The previous unlimited structure did not reach objective. They prefer the structure of 2007.

Leroy Mehring, Skyline Sportsmen, is in favor of the bundling, and recommended eliminating the third choice application as that would give other hunters an opportunity.

Tony Schoonen, Skyline Sportsmen, said this proposal provides equal opportunity. The way it was done before gave the bowhunters the advantage. He supports this proposal.

Steve Kamps, Montana Bowhunters Association, said it is important that the Breaks districts are separated from the other districts.

Mary Ellen Schnurr, MOGA, said there is no biological basis to limit hunters as this proposal suggests. She feels FWP is limiting hunting just because they feel like it. They do not support reducing the number of permits available.

Jason Townsley, Montana Bowhunters Association, said this is the closest thing they agreed on as a group. Several preferred the 2007 structure.

*Action on Motion: Motion carried.*

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Replace all antlerless and brow-tined bull/antlerless elk permits with antlerless elk licenses. Unless specifically noted otherwise, this replacement would exchange one permit for one license everywhere antlerless (or BTB/antlerless) permits are in place or proposed to be in place. Holding this license would not limit the hunter to just an antlerless elk in the district for which the license is valid. All other components (time, place) would remain unchanged in this conversion. These antlerless licenses are “stand alone” licenses with no prerequisite purchase except the conservation license. They are commonly referred to as “A9/B12” licenses in reference to their statutory identification (resident and nonresident versions of the same license). This proposal would not preclude individual districts from offering permits *in addition* to these antlerless licenses to secure individual hunter harvest of two *antlerless* elk.

Action: Vermillion moved and Ream seconded the motion to replace all antlerless and browtined bull/antlerless elk permits with antlerless elk licenses as proposed.

Chairman Colton asked for public comment.

Rod Bullis, Helena, said it takes legislative action to replace the regulations with antlerless permits. There is a great deal of pressure put on the bulls.

Action on Motion: Motion carried.

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Implement 4-year waiting period for those limited entry either sex, antlered bull or brow-tined bull elk permits (hereafter “either sex”) with drawing odds 10% or less based upon first choice resident and nonresident applicants of the previous year’s drawing as presented in the elk regulation booklet. If an applicant receives an either sex elk permit that had a drawing success rate of 10% or less the previous year, that applicant must wait four years before applying for any either sex elk permit with a 10% or less drawing success rate. The list of districts may change annually based upon the previous year’s drawing results. To clarify, an applicant receiving one of these either sex elk permits in 2009 would not be eligible to apply for any other either sex elk permit with a drawing success rate of 10% or less until 2013. Either sex elk permits that fall into this category based upon the 2009 drawing are:

|        |        |        |
|--------|--------|--------|
| 282-20 | 401-20 | 621-20 |
| 283-20 | 410-20 | 622-20 |
| 310-20 | 441-20 | 631-20 |
| 313-11 | 447-20 | 632-20 |
| 313-12 | 500-20 | 690-20 |
| 313-13 | 502-20 | 690-21 |
| 339-20 | 620-20 |        |
| 380-20 |        |        |

Landowners qualifying for landowner preference would not be exempted from this waiting period for these either sex permits. However, for each or any year of the waiting period a qualifying landowner may secure an either sex elk permit valid only on his/her deeded land via a hunting access contract as defined by “HB 454 access agreements”. This option—already available for implementation--requires FWP Commission approval to allocate a permit to a landowner in exchange for agreed-to public elk hunting access. Except for the implementation of a waiting period, this proposal would not adjust existing landowner preference.

Moody likes the concept of the 4-year waiting period, but would like to exempt the landowners from that waiting period.

*Action: Moody moved and Doll seconded the motion to approve a 4-year waiting period in the HDs listed above, however the landowners would be exempted from that 4-year period.*

Chairman Colton asked for public comment.

Marvin Mace, Helena said he provided language ten years ago toward accomplishing this. Landowners applying for landowner preference should only be allowed to hunt on their own property.

*Action on Motion: Motion carried.*

### **Region 1 - Elk**

HD 121 – expand antlerless elk handicapped permit/license 121-02 to all of HD

HD 141 – eliminate antlerless permit type 141-00

HD 150/151 – eliminate 2 weeks of general license antlerless harvest during early backcountry firearm season

*Action: Ream moved and Doll seconded the motion to approve the Region 1 Elk proposals.*

Chairman Colton asked for public comment. There was none.

*Action on Motion: Motion carried.*

### **Region 2 - Elk**

LPT 002-80 – adjust archery only antlerless elk license 002-80 to be valid only in portions of HDs 201 and 203

HD 201 – establish a portion of district (201-02) with 100 antlerless permits/licenses, and decrease antlerless permits/licenses valid in the entire district (201-00) from 100 to 5

HD 203 – decrease antlerless permits/licenses in 203-00 from 100 to 50

HDs 204/261/270 – eliminate antlerless general license season and replace with antlerless permits/licenses (25 in HD 204, 25 in HD 261, 15 in HD 270-00 and 30 in HD 270-01); combine district portions 261-00 and 261-01 into single permit/license area; adjust antlerless permits/licenses 270-01 to be valid only from 11/15–11/28 HDs

210/212/213/215/216/281/283/285/291/292/293 – replace general license antlerless opportunity in third week with BTB; proposed antlerless permit/license levels are 250 in HD 210, 250 in HD 213, 350 in HD 215-00, 250

in HD 215-01, 150 in HD 281, 50 in HD 283-00, 100 in HD 283-01, 75 in HD 283-02, 5 in HD 283-20, 75 in HD 285-20, 200 in HD 285-21, 300 in HD 291, 200 in HD 292 and 50 in HD 293

HD 212 – split HD into two portions with 500 antlerless permits/licenses in 212-00 and 100 antlerless permits/licenses in 212-01

HD 216 – eliminate split districts 216-00 and 216-01, with 75 antlerless permits/licenses valid district-wide

HD 250 – eliminate antlerless harvest by archery, youth and PTHFV opportunities

HD 280 – eliminate antlerless harvest by PTHFV opportunity

HD 290 – create unlimited OTC archery only antlerless elk license 290-80 from 9/5-1/1

HD 298 – add HD to unlimited OTC archery only antlerless elk licenses 002-80

*Action: Ream moved and Colton seconded the motion to approve the Region 2 Elk proposals.*

Chairman Colton asked for public comment. There was none.

*Action on Motion: Motion carried*

### **Region 3 - Elk**

HD 300 – expand district to include south portion of current HD 328; increase antlerless elk licenses 300-80 from 200 to 450; apply general license antlerless harvest on private and DNRC land only

HDs 300/328/329/331/332 – convert general license AB to BTB; ES available for youth and PTHFV

HDs 302 – create unlimited BTB permit 302-50 for archery and firearm season in HD 302; create 350 antlerless elk licenses 302-80 through HD 302; apply general license antlerless harvest on private and DNRC land only; expand HD 302 to include central portion of HD 328

HD 309 – convert current general antlerless season from 9/1-1/15 to either sex with antlerless only after end of general firearm season

HD 310 – convert unlimited either sex permits 310-50 to limited with quota range of 5 to 450; eliminate general license either sex opportunity for youth and PTHFV

HD 317 – convert 5-week general license BTB/antlerless season to 5-week general license BTB with general license BTB/antlerless available last two weeks

HDs 319/341 – eliminate BTB/antlerless elk permits 319-10 and 341-10; eliminate all general license archery and firearm antlerless harvest opportunity except youth and PTHFV in firearm season

HDs 322/323/324/325/326/327/330 – eliminate antlerless elk license 322-80

HD 321 – divide HD 321 into HDs 321 and 334; general license adjusted from AB to BTB or antlerless for archery and firearm in HD 321; general license BTB or antlerless for archery in HD 334; general license BTB with BTB/antlerless for youth and PTHFV for firearm in HD 334; create 100 antlerless licenses 321-80 in HD 321; create 125 antlerless licenses 334-80 in HD 334

HD 328 – reduce HD with portions going to HDs 300 and 302; 150 antlerless licenses 328-80; apply general license antlerless harvest on private and DNRC land only; establish BTB/antlerless archery season if no unlimited BTB permits

HDs 329/331/332 – convert split season to 5-week BTB season with antlerless licenses; antlerless license numbers would be 250 in HD 329, 350 in HD 331 and 150 in HD 332

HDs 339/343 – addition of general license antlerless opportunity during last two weeks of general firearm season.

*Action: Vermillion moved and Ream seconded the motion to approve the Region 3 Elk proposals.*

Tony Schoonen, Skyline Sportsmen, wants to change antlerless bull to brow tine bull. He wants to see biological data on why this is being changed. He wants to see youth able to shoot bulls as well as either sex. How many hunters are archers or ride 4 wheelers? Do these people who want to draw for bull elk think they are the only ones to draw? Actually, everyone puts in. Leave any bull on the proposal.

Leroy Mehring said the split season is popular. It would be detrimental to change the season. He is opposed to making the area open to browtined bulls.

Tom Bugni, Skyline Sportsmen, said to do away with the two-elk regulation and retain the spike elk regulation in the Lima Peaks and Medicine Lodge up Sheep Creek.

Rod Bullis, Helena, is concerned about the antlerless increase in HD339 and HD343 that went to 500 and 800. Going to the last two weeks antlerless only will create a large crowding issue. Offer end of season antlerless licenses.

*Action on Motion: Motion carried.*

#### **Region 4 - Elk**

LPT 004-80 – adjust antlerless elk license to be valid on private and DNRC lands in all Region 4 HDs except HDs 401, 410, 417, 420 and 455

HD 416 – create 200 antlerless licenses 416-80 valid in portion of district south and west of the Sheep Creek Road (USFS Road #119)

HD 425 – create five ES permits valid throughout HD; add HD archery regulations for 23 HDs outside Breaks (same permit level as proposal above)

HD 442 – add harvest from existing antlerless licenses 442-80 to HD 442 elk quota; antlerless harvest from these licenses will stop if quota is met

HDs 448/420 – addition of general license opportunity during last nine days of general firearm season; reduce antlerless permits/licenses in HDs 420 and 448 from 250 to 200

*Action: Moody moved and Doll seconded the motion to approve the Region 4 Elk proposals.*

Chairman Colton asked for public comment.

Adam Barker, Montana Bowhunters Association, recommended eliminating archery in HD441. They oppose the 5 either sex permits in HD425.

*Action on Motion: Motion carried.*

#### **Region 5 - Elk**

HD 560 -- expand antlerless licenses to be valid outside Nat'l Forest Bndy throughout HD; increase antlerless licenses from 50 to 75

HD 580 -- expand antlerless licenses to be valid outside Nat'l Forest Bndy throughout HD

*Action: Colton moved and Doll seconded the motion to approve the Region 5 Elk proposals.*

Chairman Colton asked for public comment. There was none.

*Action on Motion: Motion carried.*

#### **Region 6 - Elk**

No proposed changes.

Doll asked if the survey would be done soon enough to make a final decision.

Mark Sullivan, FWP Regional biologist, said they will be flying the survey the third week in February so recommended quota changes can be made before the season.

*Action: Doll moved and Colton seconded the motion to approve the Region 6 Elk proposals.*

Colton asked for public comment. There was none.

*Action on Motion: Motion carried.*

### **Region 7 - Elk**

HD 700 – increase antlerless permits/licenses 700-00 from 600 to 700

HDs 700/701 -- reduce archery ES permits 798-15 from 820 to 600

HDs 702/704/705 – increase antlerless permits/licenses 799-00 from 150 to 200

*Action: Doll moved and Colton seconded the motion to approve the Region 7 Elk proposals.*

Chairman Colton asked for public comment.

Mary Ellen Schnurr, MOGA, said there should be an increase rather than a decrease in HD 700-701.

John Ensign, FWP Region 7 Wildlife Manager, said permits were to prevent hunter shift and overcrowding. Decision was to reduce numbers to a more equitable level.

*Action on Motion: Motion carried.*

### **ANTELOPE**

#### **Statewide**

Move the opening day of the general firearm season for antelope to Saturday of Columbus Day weekend and adjust the antelope archery only season to end Friday the day before this opener.

Adjust the existing antelope license application process to include separate application opportunities (same deadline, same overall application form) for either sex and doe/fawn licenses. Both the antelope either sex application and the antelope doe/fawn application would each include 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> choices. This would allow any single applicant to potentially receive two antelope licenses from the drawing—one either sex and one doe/fawn. These could be in the same or in different hunting districts. This is consistent with current regulations that allow an individual hunter to hold up to three antelope licenses only one of which may be either sex.

Adjust the antelope 900 archery only license structure and application process to include a separate application process from the existing antelope application and drawing process. Specifically, adjust the antelope 900 archery only license to first and only choice with an application deadline of May 1 (same as Moose, Sheep, Goat and Bison). Application for this license would then preclude the applicant from applying for other antelope licenses to be allocated in the existing Deer, Elk and Antelope drawing with an application deadline of June 1. If successful in securing an antelope 900 license, the applicant may still purchase up to two antelope doe/fawn 900-30 licenses and could still purchase any surplus antelope licenses within the existing limitation of only three antelope licenses per hunter only one of which may be either sex.

### **Region 2 - Antelope**

HD 215 – increase ES licenses 215-00 from 10 to 25 and increase DF licenses 215-10 from 15 to 25

### **Region 3 - Antelope**

HD 300 – eliminate limited OTC DF licenses 300-20; create 100 DF licenses 300-10 through annual drawing

HD 301 – eliminate DF licenses 301-10



HD 318 -- eliminate limited OTC DF licenses 318-20; create 500 DF licenses 318-10 through annual drawing  
HD 319 -- decrease ES licenses from 75 to 50; create 25 DF licenses 319-10 through annual drawing  
HD 388 -- eliminate limited OTC DF licenses 388-20; create 100 DF licenses 388-10 through annual drawing;  
create 388-30 DF license up to 2 licenses available to successful 388-00 applicants; clarify exclusion zone

**Region 4 - Antelope**

HD 481 -- adjust DF licenses 481-10 to be valid throughout HD

**Region 5 - Antelope**

HDs 500/501/510/513/530/550/560/570/590 -- contingent upon adjustment to application process in "antelope-statewide" above, adjust DF licenses from being available for purchase by success ES applicants to independent DF licenses distributed through annual drawing.

**Region 7 - Antelope**

No proposed changes

*Action: Vermillion moved and Doll seconded the motion to approve Regions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7 Antelope proposals.*

Vice-Chairman Vermillion asked for public comment. There was none.

*Action on Motion: Motion carried.*

**Region 6 - Antelope**

HD 600 -- create 200 DF licenses 600-11 valid in portion of HD west of Highway 233

*Action: Doll moved and Ream seconded the motion to approve the Region 6 Antelope proposals.*

Vice-Chairman Vermillion asked for public comment. There was none.

*Action on Motion: Motion carried*

**13. 2010/2011 Moose/Sheep/Goat Hunting Seasons and HD Boundaries – Proposed.** Season structures and hunting district boundaries are adopted biennially for all game species. In proposing adjustments to the Commission, FWP proposes existing structure except for specific changes.

**MOOSE**

**Region 1 - Moose**

HD 105 -- eliminate antlerless licenses 105-10

**Region 2 - Moose**

HDs 240/250/270 -- convert all ES licenses to AB

**Region 3 - Moose**

HD 303 -- expand HD in northwest corner of Crazy Mountains; convert ES licenses to AB; increase AB quota from 4 to 6

HDs 321/323/326/327 -- close HD 321; eliminate ES licenses 323-00; eliminate ES licenses 326-00; eliminate ES licenses 327-00

HD 334 -- convert ES licenses 334-00 to AB

**Region 4 - Moose**

No proposed changes

**Region 5 - Moose**

HD 515 – close HD 515

**Region 6 - Moose**

No proposed changes

*Action: Vermillion moved and Ream seconded the motion to approve all of the Moose proposals. Motion carried.*

**BIGHORN SHEEP**

**Region 1 - Sheep**

No proposed changes

**Region 2 - Sheep**

No proposed changes

HD270 has had a large die-off and is being monitored so is proposed to be closed.

**Region 3 - Sheep**

HD 302 – reopen with 2 ES licenses 302-00; season to close Oct 31

HD 303 – expand HD with adjustment to northern boundary

HD 381 – close HD 381

**Region 4 - Sheep**

No proposed changes

**Region 5 - Sheep**

HD 500 – expand HD

**Region 6 - Sheep**

HD 622 – adjust east bndy; expand area adult ewe licenses 622-30 are valid to that portion of HD lying west of Timber Creek

HD 680 – increase ES licenses 680-25 from 20 to 25

*Action: Ream moved and Vermillion seconded the motion to approve the 2010 and 2011 Bighorn Sheep Hunting Seasons and Hunting Districts as proposed by FWP.*

Vice-Chairman Vermillion asked for public comment.

Roland Deane, Three Forks, wants more opportunity.

Mike Murphy, Wolf Creek, said he hunted HD381 for 4-5 days and saw 65 head of sheep of which 6 were mature rams. He is concerned about closing the area as thousands of dollars went into removing the wild horses that originally resided there, and then relocating sheep into the area. Predators are taking the sheep. He suggested making this a separate district. Taking one sheep will not make a difference – don't close it.

Kurt Alt, FWP Region 3 Wildlife Manager, said the Department has closed other districts at similar population levels, and that has never been challenged before. In this case, the population has struggled, and is continuing to decrease. Surveys have indicated extremely low numbers. It is an area of concern.

*Action on Motion: Motion carried.*

## **MOUNTAIN GOAT**

### **Region 1 - Goat**

No proposed changes.

### **Region 2 - Goat**

HD 280 – close HD

HD 223 – move opening date to standard 9/15

### **Region 3 - Goat**

HDs 312/313/314/320/324/325/326/327/328/330/331/362/393 – move to a standard opener of 9/15

### **Region 4 - Goat**

No proposed changes.

### **Region 5 - Goat**

No proposed changes.

*Action: Ream moved and Vermillion seconded the motion to approve the 2010 and 2011 Mountain Goat Hunting Seasons and Hunting Districts as proposed by FWP.*

Vice-Chairman Vermillion asked for public comment.

Mary Ellen Schnurr, MOGA, said her husband has guided hunts for 30 years and the reason the goat season had gone to September 1 was to coincide with the sheep season.

*Action on Motion: Motion carried.*

## **14. 2010/2011 Black Bear Hunting Seasons and HD Boundaries – Proposed.**

## **BLACK BEAR**

### **Statewide**

Initiate archery only season for black bear to start with the general archery opener on the first Saturday in September. The black bear archery only season would be open in any open management unit and would end not later than September 14 on the day before the Fall black bear firearm season starts. Any bear legally taken will apply towards any established quotas and subquotas and any harvest will be curtailed by quota/subquota closures.

Start Fall firearm season for black bear commonly on September 15 in all areas.

*Action: Ream moved and Vermillion seconded the motion to approve the Statewide Black Bear proposals.*

Vice-Chairman Vermillion asked for public comment.

Steve Kamps, Montana Bowhunters Association, supports the proposal.

*Action on Motion: Motion carried.*

### **Region 1 - Bear**

Switch Spring season validation to Cabinet Yaak side of Highway 93 in BMUs 100/102/104/105/108 instead of Northern Continental Divide BMUs 103/106

**Region 2 - Bear**

Create new BMU 200 to include deer/elk HDs 200/201/202/203; extend Spring season to 5/31

BMUs 216/240 – extend Spring closing date to 6/15 in deer/elk HD 270 portion of BMU 216 and in deer/elk HD 250 portion of BMU 240

BMUs 280/290 – extend Spring closing date to 5/31

**Region 3 - Bear**

BMU 300 – extend Spring closing date to 5/31

**Region 4 - Bear**

No proposed changes.

**Region 5 - Bear**

BMU 510 – adjust Fall opener to 9/15; expand Spring and Fall quotas and subquotas to entire BMU

BMU 520 -- adjust Fall opener to 9/15; expand Spring and Fall subquotas to entire BMU

**Region 7 - Bear**

BMU 700 – increase Fall quota from 2 to 4

*Action: Ream moved and Vermillion seconded the motion to approve the 2010 and 2011 Black Bear Hunting Seasons and Hunting Districts as proposed by FWP.*

Vice-Chairman Vermillion asked for public Comment. There was none

*Action on Motion: Motion carried.*

**15. 2010/2011 Biennial Quota Ranges – Proposed.**

The intention of the quota ranges is to establish a range, through public review and commission process, that represents a range for adjustment. If the adjustment is appropriate and within the quota range, they do not come before the Commission.

*Action: Ream moved and Vermillion seconded the motion to approve the 2010/2011 Biennial Quota Ranges as recommended by the Department.*

Vice-Chairman Vermillion asked for public comment. There was none.

*Action on Motion: Motion carried.*

**16. 2010/2011 Bison Hunting Seasons and HD Boundaries – Proposed.** For the 2010 and 2011 bison season structures, the only change proposed is an expansion of hunting district 385 on USFS lands north of Yellowstone National Park. Annual harvest quotas are adopted later in Spring and Summer.

**Region 3**

HD 385 – expand HD 385 by adding USFS lands in Maiden Basin and portions of Little Trail Creek to existing Eagle Creek portion of HD 385

*Action: Ream moved and Vermillion seconded the motion to adopt the 2010 and 2011 Bison Hunting Seasons and Hunting Districts as proposed by FWP.*

Vice-Chairman Vermillion asked for public comment.

John Harrison, CSKT, said that while they don't fully agree on quotas, they do agree there should be a biologically sustainable hunt. He said that he had read a comment in the newspaper by someone from FWP accusing the tribes of being part of the reason for the decline of moose. They take issue with that comment. He said to let them know if there is a problem. They want biologically sound treaty hunts.

Vermillion said Harrison's comments are duly noted.

*Action on Motion: Motion carried.*

## **17. 2010/2011 Mountain Lion Hunting Seasons and HD Boundaries – Proposed.**

### **Statewide**

Initiate archery only season for mountain lion to would start with the general archery opener on the first Saturday in September. The mountain lion archery only season would be open in any open management unit and would end not later than the closing of the general archery season on the Sunday one week before the start of the Fall deer and elk general rifle season. Any lion legally taken will apply towards currently established Fall subquotas. That is, not more than 20% of the total individual district(s) lion quota or special licenses may be taken during Fall general archery and general rifle seasons. If the total quota or special licenses are less than five, not more than one lion may be taken during these Fall seasons.

### **Regions 1 – 7 – Mountain Lion**

No proposed changes.

*Action: Doll moved and Ream seconded the motion to adopt the 2010 and 2011 Mountain Lion Hunting Seasons and Hunting Districts as proposed by FWP.*

Vice-Chairman Vermillion asked for public comment.

Tim Vosburgh, Chippewa Cree Tribe Wildlife Biologist, requested splitting HD 680 / 690 adjacent to Rocky Boy Reservation. They believe there is a high potential for over-harvest of lions in the Bearpaw Mountains. Last year 6 were killed on private land in this area – it is dominated by one outfitter. Tribal land is not open to hunting to the general public. Lion research has been conducted over the last 3 years, indicating there is a very small population of females. Harvesting them would be detrimental to the Bearpaw population. Splitting the HD would split the quota between the two districts of which HD690 is mountains and foothills, and HD680 is prairie and breaks areas. There are large differences in access.

Mike Murphy, Wolf Creek, said there is a need to maintain the balance. In HD381, the lions are hammering the big game populations. He would like to see HD339 separated and a quota established there.

Steve Kamps, Montana Bowhunters Association, supports the proposals.

Mary Ellen Schnurr, MOGA, said several outfitters have mentioned the predation issue of big game. It is past time to put limits on. Predators are killing everything off. Look at the prey base as well as the species of consideration.

Rod Bullis, Helena, said he has advocated a Mountain Lion plan. He suggested a report on what general lion hunting season has done since ten years ago when it was reestablished. Orphaning kittens is a nationwide issue.

Roland Deane, Montana Houndsmen Association, is not in favor of this season. It will not make a significant difference on the amount of lions taken.

Moody said there has to be a better way to find out how many lions there are than they way it is done now.

*Action on Motion: Motion carried.*

**18. 2010/2011 Upland Game Bird Regulations and Turkey Quotas – Proposed.**

**Statewide**

Non-toxic shot for all game bird hunting on all WMAs

*Action: Ream moved and Vermillion seconded the motion to approve the Statewide 2010/2011 Upland Game Bird proposals.*

Vice-Chairman Vermillion asked for public comment. There was none.

*Action on Motion: Motion carried.*

**Region 1**

LPT 182-20 – convert 400 limited spring tom turkey permits to unlimited OTC Spring licenses

LPT 183-20 – convert 300 limited spring tom turkey permits to unlimited OTC Spring licenses

LPT 183-21 – increase Spring tom turkey permits from 10 to 30

**Region 2**

Bitterroot Watershed – establish new district with all of Ravalli County and portions of Missoula County; Spring season will be general license tom, Fall season will be general license ES

Mineral County – revoke turkey season closure in portion of Mineral County

Portion of Missoula County – adjust district boundary in accordance with new Bitterroot Watershed district

**Region 3 - 7**

No proposed changes.

*Action: Vermillion moved and Ream seconded the motion to adopt the 2010 and 2011 Upland Game Bird Hunting Seasons and Quotas as proposed by FWP.*

Vice-Chairman Vermillion asked for public comment. There was none.

**\*\*Doll recommended that the Little Rockies be closed to turkey hunting. He stated, too, that the pheasant is the only bird species in Montana where it is unlawful to take a hen. He asked what people are supposed to do if they manage to take a hen - take it, leave it or what? He would like to see either sex included in the bag limit.**

Harold Wentland, Region 6 Wildlife Manager, stated that tukeys are a marginal commodity, that the weather and predators get them. The region does not support micro closures, so would not support a closure in the Little Rockies specifically for them.

**\*\*Jeff Herbert, FWP Wildlife Assistant Bureau Chief, said there is no biological reason to hunt hen pheasants. In the early 1970s there was one hen in the bag allowed. It is a social issue.**

*Action on Motion: Motion carried.*

**\*\*Doll made amendments to the Upland Game Bird section at the January Commission meeting as follows:**  
Doll recommended that the Little Rockies be closed to turkey hunting. He stated, too, that the pheasant is the only bird species in Montana where it is unlawful to take a hen. He asked what people are supposed to do if they ~~do manage to~~ accidentally take a hen - take it, leave it or what? He would like to see one hen ~~either sex~~ included in the bag limit. Jeff Herbert, FWP Wildlife Assistant Bureau Chief, said there is no biological reason not to hunt hen pheasants.

**19. 2010/2011 Hunting Season Dates – Proposed.**

| <b>Season</b>              | <b>Dates/Process</b>                                                                  |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Antelope 900               | 8/15 – 11/14 (8/15 to 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday in November)                             |
| Antelope archery           | 9/4 – 10/8 (First Saturday of September to Friday of Columbus Day weekend)            |
| Antelope general           | 10/9 – 11/14 (Saturday of Columbus Day weekend to 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday in November) |
| Moose/sheep/goat           | 9/15 – 11/28 (9/15 to Sunday after Thanksgiving; some districts vary)                 |
| Bison                      | 11/15 – 2/15                                                                          |
| Black bear spring          | 4/15 – 5/15 (some districts end later)                                                |
| Black bear fall - archery  | 9/4 – 9/14 (First Saturday of September to 9/14)                                      |
| Black bear fall            | 9/15 – 11/28 (9/15 to Sunday after Thanksgiving)                                      |
| Deer/elk/lion/wolf archery | 9/4 – 10/17 (First Sat in Sept to Sunday before general deer/elk opener)              |
| Deer/elk/wolf backcountry  | 9/15 – 11/28 (9/15 to Sunday after Thanksgiving)                                      |
| Deer/elk general           | 10/23 – 11/28 (37 days ending Thanksgiving Sunday—Saturday start)                     |
| Mountain lion fall         | 10/23 – 11/28 (37 days ending Thanksgiving Sunday—Saturday start)                     |
| Mountain lion winter       | 12/1 – 4/14                                                                           |
| Wolf general               | 10/23 – 12/31 (start of general deer/elk opener to 12/31)                             |
| Sage grouse                | 9/1 – 11/1                                                                            |
| Sharp-tailed grouse        | 9/1 – 1/1                                                                             |
| Mountain grouse            | 9/1 – 12/15                                                                           |
| Partridge                  | 9/1 – 1/1 (9/1 to 1/10 for portion of Carbon County)                                  |
| Pheasant                   | 10/9 – 1/1 (Saturday of Columbus Day weekend to 1/1)                                  |
| Youth Pheasant             | overlap youth waterfowl                                                               |
| General/Youth Waterfowl    | to be adopted late summer 2010                                                        |
| Turkey spring              | 4/10 – 5/16 (2nd Saturday in April to 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday in May)                  |
| Turkey fall                | 9/1 – 1/1                                                                             |

**Proposed 2011 Season Dates**

| <b>Season</b>              | <b>Dates/Process</b>                                                                  |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Antelope 900               | 8/15 – 11/13 (8/15 to 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday in November)                             |
| Antelope archery           | 9/3 – 10/7 (First Saturday in September to Friday of Columbus Day weekend)            |
| Antelope general           | 10/8 – 11/13 (Saturday of Columbus Day weekend to 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday in November) |
| Moose/sheep/goat           | 9/15 – 11/27 (9/15 to Sunday after Thanksgiving; some districts vary)                 |
| Bison                      | 11/15 – 2/15                                                                          |
| Black bear spring          | 4/15 – 5/15 (some districts end later)                                                |
| Black bear fall - archery  | 9/3 – 9/14 (First Saturday of September to 9/14)                                      |
| Black bear fall            | 9/15 – 11/27 (9/15 to Sunday after Thanksgiving)                                      |
| Deer/elk/lion/wolf archery | 9/3 – 10/16 (First Sat in Sept to Sunday before general deer/elk opener)              |
| Deer/elk/wolf backcountry  | 9/15 – 11/27 (9/15 to Sunday after Thanksgiving)                                      |
| Deer/elk general           | 10/22 – 11/27 (37 days ending Thanksgiving Sunday—Saturday start)                     |
| Mountain lion fall         | 10/22 – 11/27 (37 days ending Thanksgiving Sunday—Saturday start)                     |
| Mountain lion winter       | 12/1 – 4/14                                                                           |
| Wolf general               | 10/22 – 12/31 (start of general deer/elk opener to 12/31)                             |
| Sage grouse                | 9/1 – 11/1                                                                            |
| Sharp-tailed grouse        | 9/1 – 1/1                                                                             |
| Mountain grouse            | 9/1 – 12/15                                                                           |
| Partridge                  | 9/1 – 1/1 (9/1 to 1/10 for portion of Carbon County)                                  |
| Pheasant                   | 10/8 – 1/1 (Saturday of Columbus Day weekend to 1/1)                                  |
| Youth Pheasant             | overlap youth waterfowl                                                               |
| General/Youth Waterfowl    | To be adopted late summer 2011                                                        |
| Turkey spring              | 4/9 – 5/15 (2nd Saturday in April to 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday in May)                   |
| Turkey fall                | 9/1 – 1/1                                                                             |

*Action: Vermillion moved and Ream seconded the motion to adopt the 2010 and 2011 Hunting Seasons Dates as proposed by FWP, with recognition that the wolf season is not included at this time.*

Vice-Chairman Vermillion asked for public comment. There was none.

*Action on Motion: Motion carried.*

## **20. 2010/2011 Game Damage/Management Season Quota Authorizations – Proposed**

Game damage quotas have long been adopted for each region for deer, elk and antelope. With the addition of Management Seasons, the need emerged to ensure these quotas accommodate that tool as well. These quotas represent proposed authority and limits to potentially prescribed harvest from any future game damage hunts and/or management seasons. To clarify, these quotas represent prescribed harvest—not necessarily permit/license numbers or hunter numbers.

### **GAME DAMAGE/MANAGEMENT SEASON QUOTAS 2010 and 2011**

| <b>REGION</b> | <b>DEER</b> | <b>ELK</b>  | <b>ANTELOPE</b> |
|---------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| <b>1</b>      | <b>100</b>  | <b>50</b>   | <b>0</b>        |
| <b>2</b>      | <b>400</b>  | <b>600</b>  | <b>50</b>       |
| <b>3</b>      | <b>1400</b> | <b>2000</b> | <b>200</b>      |
| <b>4</b>      | <b>1500</b> | <b>1000</b> | <b>450</b>      |
| <b>5</b>      | <b>1400</b> | <b>600</b>  | <b>300</b>      |
| <b>6</b>      | <b>5000</b> | <b>500</b>  | <b>100</b>      |
| <b>7</b>      | <b>5000</b> | <b>200</b>  | <b>500</b>      |

*Action: Ream moved and Vermillion seconded the motion to adopt the 2010 and 2011 Game Damage and Management Season Quota authorizations as proposed by FWP.*

Vice-Chairman Vermillion asked for public comment. There was none.

*Action on Motion: Motion carried.*

## **21. Open Microphone – Public Opportunity to Address Additional FWP Issues.**

Scott Birkenbuel, Beaver Creek Rendezvous, described his organization and asked the Commission to consider providing 7 licenses for disabled nonresident or resident hunters. Disabled persons are allowed to bring a companion, however the companion cannot hunt. They would work with Brad Schmitz, FWP Region 7 Supervisor.

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Action: It was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Shane Colton, Chairman

Joe Maurier, Director